

**Case 3359*****Germarostes* Paulian, 1982 and *Haroldostes* Paulian, 1982 (Insecta, Coleoptera, SCARABAEIDAE): proposed conservation**

Henry F. Howden

*Canadian Museum of Nature, P.O. Box 3443, Station "D", Ottawa, ON, K1P 6P4 Canada (e-mail: hhowden@mus-nature.ca)*

**Abstract.** The purpose of this application, under Article 23.9.3 of the Code and Recommendation 23A, is to conserve the generic name *Germarostes* Paulian, 1982 and the subgeneric name *Haroldostes* Paulian, 1982 for a group of New World scarab beetles. Since 1982, Paulian's *Germarostes* or *Haroldostes* (the latter often cited as a subgenus) have been universally used by numerous authors. The names are threatened by the unused senior subjective synonym *Sphaerelytrus* Blanchard, 1841. It is proposed that the names *Germarostes* and *Haroldostes* are conserved by suppression of *Sphaerelytrus*.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; SCARABAEIDAE; CERATOCANTHINAE; *Sphaerelytrus*; *Germarostes*; *Haroldostes*; *Sphaerelytrus nigerrimus*; *Germarostes aphodioides*; *Haroldostes rugiceps*; New World; scarab beetles.

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1. Blanchard (1841, pl. 10, fig. 10) published a drawing of the new New World genus and species *Sphaerelytrus nigerrimus* Blanchard (publication dates from Sherborn & Griffin, 1934). The description of this species was published by Blanchard (1847, p. 186). Until now, the publication date of the species *Sphaerelytrus nigerrimus* Blanchard has been erroneously listed by all authors as 1846 (the actual publication date of the text of this volume was 1847—see Sherborn & Griffin, 1934). While it has not been explicitly mentioned in the literature as yet, the drawing of *S. nigerrimus* by Blanchard (1841, pl. 10, fig. 10) serves as an indication (Article 12.2.7 of the Code—New genus-group name or a species-group name proposed in association with an illustration) and establishes the publication date of the genus *Sphaerelytrus* as 1841. Lacordaire (1856) suggested that, since Blanchard did not mention any generic characters, the name might be a 'lapsus calami' for *Sphaeromorphus* Germar, 1843, and it has been treated as such by several authors, including Paulian (1982), who mentioned that it might be in 'error?'. The genus *Sphaeromorphus* is now considered a synonym of *Ceratocanthus* White, 1842. The generic nomenclatural changes involved for the New World species were fully discussed by Martinez, (1968) and the placement of most species is given by him in a detailed list. Since the paper by Martinez, several New World species have been described, but until Paulian's (1982) paper, all of these were placed in either *Cloeotus* Germar, 1843 or *Ceratocanthus* White 1842 (or in the junior homonym *Acanthocerus* Macleay, 1819). Both *Cloeotus* and *Ceratocanthus* are still considered valid, but have been redefined for taxa outside the scope of this case. From 1856 to the present, *Sphaerelytrus* has not been used as a valid name.

2. The type species of *Sphaerelytrus* Blanchard, 1841 (*Sphaerelytrus nigerrimus* Blanchard, 1841) is currently considered to be in the subgenus *Haroldostes* Paulian, 1982 (p. 44) (type species by original designation *Acanthocerus rugiceps* Germar, 1843, p. 134). If *Sphaerelytrus* Blanchard is used as a valid name, it would need to replace the subgeneric name *Haroldostes* Paulian, 1982, which is a junior subjective synonym of *Sphaerelytrus* Blanchard, 1841. *Haroldostes* Paulian, 1982 is currently considered by Howden & Gill (2000) a subgenus of *Germarostes* Paulian, 1982 (p. 13) (type species by original designation *Melolontha aphodioides* Illiger, 1800 (p. 109)). Since 1982, Paulian's *Germarostes* or *Haroldostes* have been universally used by numerous authors. If *Sphaerelytrus* is used as a valid name, it would replace *Haroldostes* and, since it would be the oldest name, replace *Germarostes* as the nominotypical name of the entire genus; *Germarostes* would then be reassigned as a subgenus of *Sphaerelytrus*. Currently there are 71 valid names placed in *Germarostes* and a change in generic usage now would cause confusion for a considerable time. Authors who have used *Germarostes* since 1982 are: Ratcliffe (1991, 2002); Howden (1992, 2003); Morón (1994); Poole & Gentili (1996); Morón et al. (1998); Peck & Thomas (1998); Delgado et al. (2000); Howden & Gill (2000, 2005); Harpootlian (2001); Mendoza & Jerez (2001); Navarrete-Heredia (2001); Navarrete-Heredia et al. (2001); Grebennikov et al. (2002); Jameson (2002); Kriska & Young (2003); Morón & Arce (2003); Riley & Wolfe (2003); Smith (2003); Weeks et al. (2003); Grebennikov et al. (2004); Delgado & Márquez (2006); Ocampo & Ballerio (2006). Authors who have used *Haroldostes* since 1982 are: Howden & Gill (2000); Delgado et al. (2000); Ratcliffe (2002); Howden (2003); Grebennikov et al. (2004); Delgado & Márquez (2006); Ocampo & Ballerio (2006). Other papers using the name *Germarostes* (*Haroldostes*) are in press. Although *Sphaerelytrus* has not been used since 1899, Article 23.9.1 cannot be used for an automatic reversal of precedence because the names *Haroldostes* and *Germarostes* have been used in fewer than 25 publications. It is, therefore, proposed that the names *Haroldostes* and *Germarostes* are conserved by suppression of *Sphaerelytrus* in order to maintain current and prevailing usage.

3. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to suppress the generic name *Sphaerelytrus* Blanchard, 1841 for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *Germarostes* Paulian, 1982 (gender: masculine), type species by original designation *Melolontha aphodioides* Illiger, 1800;
  - (b) *Haroldostes* Paulian, 1982 (gender: masculine), type species by original designation *Acanthocerus rugiceps* Germar, 1843;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *aphodioides* Illiger, 1800, as published in the binomen *Melolontha aphodioides* (specific name of the type species of *Germarostes* Paulian, 1982);
  - (b) *rugiceps* Germar, 1843, as published in the binomen *Acanthocerus rugiceps* (specific name of the type species of *Haroldostes* Paulian, 1982);
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the name *Sphaerelytrus* Blanchard, 1841, as suppressed in (1) above.

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